

record doubtless refers to the same birds as mine which sojourned in the locality for about 20 days. 19th September is probably the earliest record of this east-Asiatic migrant in peninsular India. Moreover, it *may* suggest that the Forest Wagtail regularly passes down the eastern side of the Peninsula before reaching its winter quarters on the west. More observations at the appropriate season are called for.

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY,  
MADRAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE,  
TAMBARAM,  
December 20, 1959.

P. J. SANJEEVA RAJ

8. THE ADJUTANT STORK, *LEPTOPTILOS DUBIUS*  
(GMELIN), A DESTROYER OF LOCUSTS IN RAJASTHAN

The Adjutant Stork [*Leptoptilos dubius* (Gmelin)] appeared singly as well as in large groups of about 2000 (*sic*) in the villages Rayanwali, Thukrana, Freedsar, and Kardoo of Suratgarh tehsil of Sri Ganganagar district on or about 14 August 1956. It was learnt from villagers over 60 years old that the visit of the Adjutant Stork (local name *Nalia*) to this area was an uncommon feature. About four decades back some birds of this species had appeared but not to the extent seen during August 1956. The unusual appearance of the bird and in such vast numbers was presumably due to large patches of concentrated breeding of solitaries of the Desert Locust in a gross area of about 50 square miles during July-August 1956, on which the birds were found preying. During the same season concentrations of a number of grasshoppers of various species also occurred at several places in the desert area of Rajasthan. The birds were observed preying in the early morning on the hoppers and fledglings of the Desert Locust, the Migratory Locust, and the grasshoppers, which were inactive at that time. Peculiar methods were adopted by this bird in preying on hoppers and adults. It would run a few steps flapping its wings briskly to beat the bushes of phog, *Calligonum polygonoides* Linn., and bauwli, *Acacia jacquemontii* Benth., on which large congregations of the hoppers and fledglings of the Desert Locust were noted to be resting in the morning. Disturbed by the heavy and noisy flaps of the wings the insects jumped down from their roosting places, when they were immediately attacked with the wedge-shaped bill, picked up, and devoured. After taking a heavy toll of various species of locusts and grasshoppers, the birds

were observed to rest during the afternoon, squatting on the ground with the shanks extended well in front and the head drawn in between the shoulders. In the evenings they became active again and resumed feeding. Their food in this area appeared to be restricted mostly to the various species of Acrididae. It was further observed that the birds selected roosting places high up on the sand dunes which were devoid of vegetation, but as these places were very near to the infested area they usually remained localized here for three to four days. The flocks disappeared on or about 21 August 1956.

LOCUST OUTPOST,  
CHURU,  
RAJASTHAN,  
February 17, 1959.

GURDAS SINGH  
CHARAN SINGH

#### 9. ADDITIONS TO THE BIRDS OF COIMBATORE, SOUTH INDIA

I have recently obtained some birds around Coimbatore which are relatively rare in southern India and which may be worth recording.

***Limosa limosa limosa* (Linnaeus):** The Blacktailed Godwit

On 18-10-59, my son shot a solitary bird which was in the company of 5 or 6 Greenshanks, *Glottis nebularia* (Günnerus) on the edge of a tank about 18 miles from Coimbatore. He noted that though often driven away by the Greenshanks it was reluctant to leave and kept with them. This is the first time I have seen the bird here in my experience extending over 40 years.

***Demigretta asha* (Sykes):** The Indian Reef Heron

One was shot on 19 November 1958.

Both the above birds have been examined and identified at the Bombay Natural History Society.

15, PERUMALKOIL STREET,  
FORT, COIMBATORE, S. INDIA,  
November 6, 1959.

B. SUBBIAH PILLAI